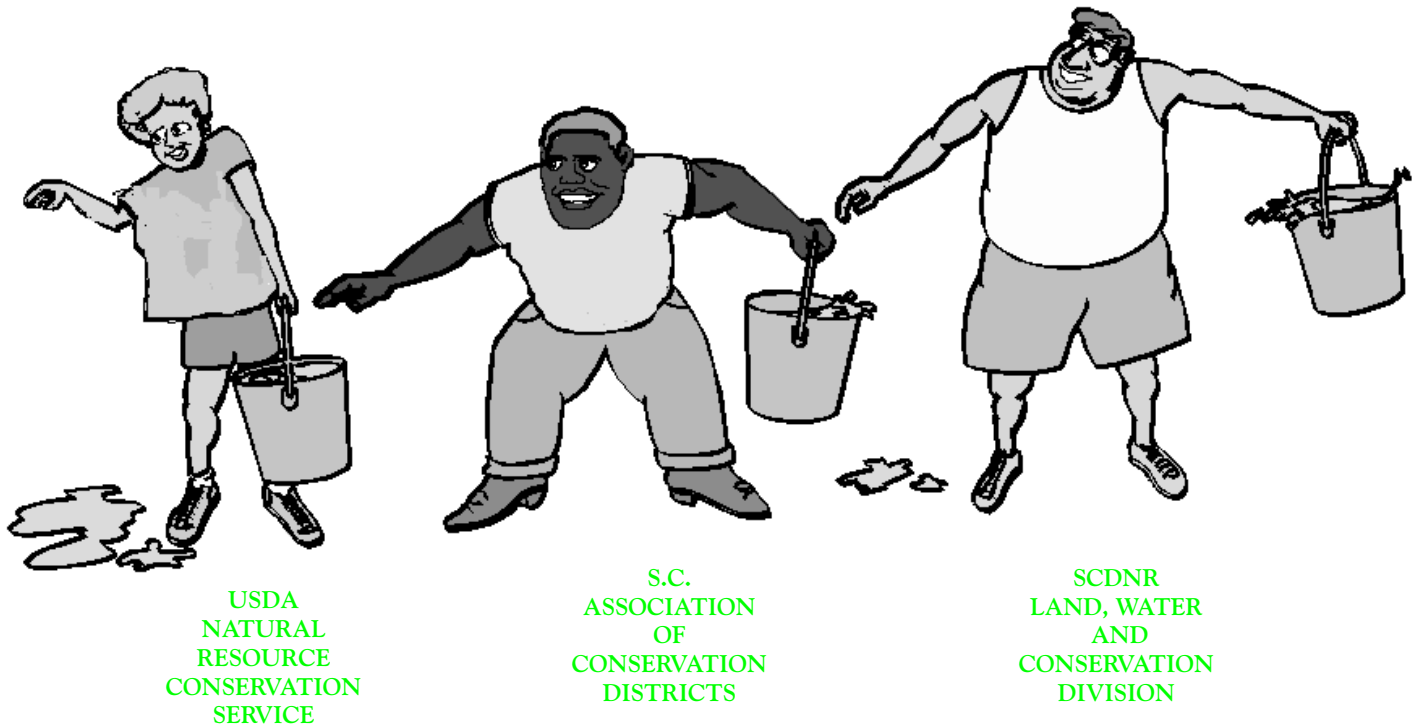


# THE CONSERVATION PARTNERSHIP



**The Conservation Partnership** is an agreement entered into by the three parties to facilitate the working relationship within each conservation district.

As partners, we are interdependent, having independent responsibilities, and yet we depend on each other for successful delivery of programs.

## TOTAL QUALITY MANAGEMENT

Total Quality Management is a process designed to focus on customer expectations, prevent problems, promote open decision-making, and build commitment throughout the organization.

The **Conservation Partnership** and this handbook are evidences that the process is working.

### **VISION: A Productive Nation in Harmony with a Quality Environment**

#### **GUIDING PRINCIPLES:**

##### **We share commitment to:**

- Listening, anticipating and responding to our customers' needs
- Anticipating, identifying and addressing issues
- Decision-making at the lowest appropriate level

##### **We pledge to work together by**

- Advancing and practicing teamwork
- Involving each partner in the decision-making process
- Communicating, coordinating and cooperating
- Advocating ecosystem management- a holistic approach
- Maintaining and enhancing our grass-roots delivery system
- Building new alliances to expand our partnership
- Fostering economically viable environmental policies
- Improving the quality of life for future generations
- Sustaining and conserving our natural resources and environment

##### **We will improve our efficiency and effectiveness by:**

- Putting quality first
- Empowering people to make decisions
- Demonstrating professionalism and dedication
- Striving for continuous improvement
- Sharing training opportunities
- Promoting mutual respect, support, trust and honesty
- Sharing leadership and responsibility

## U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE NATURAL RESOURCE CONSERVATION SERVICE

The Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) of the U.S. Department of Agriculture helps individuals, groups, organizations and units of government to wisely use natural resources by providing direct, on-the-ground assistance in planning and implementation of conservation. NRCS has a Cooperative Working Agreement with your conservation district and SCDNR-LWCD, which says how the partnership of NRCS, SCDNR, and the District will work together on personnel, program delivery to customers, technical standards, facilities, equipment, data sharing, funding, liability and civil rights.

*(See Appendix for the Cooperative Working Agreement.)*

**The district is served by a NRCS field office, usually located within the district.**

**NRCS work through the Conservation Districts includes assisting:**

- Individuals such as farmers, ranchers, foresters, and land users
- Groups such as realtors, developers, land users, commodity organizations
- Units of government such as planning commissions, county and city councils, public works commissions

**Technical services include:**

- Whole farm and total planning to use, manage and sustain our natural resources
- Designing, surveying, laying out and inspecting construction of all practices outlined in the Field Office Technical Guide
- Inventorying and evaluating soil conditions
- Inventorying natural resources problems and planning solutions

**Legal responsibilities include:**

- Planning and carrying out federal community development programs such as the Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) and PL-566 Small Watershed Programs (mostly for flood control)
- Planning and carrying out federal conservation programs such as cost-share programs (Forestry Incentives, Environmental Quality Incentives, Wildlife Habitat Incentives, etc.) and land retirement programs (Conservation Reserve and Wetlands Reserve)

In addition to providing services to the public, NRCS personnel are required to attend regularly scheduled District board meetings, special meetings called by the Board of Commissioners, and District, Area, and State Association meetings.

NRCS also assists the Board in establishing priorities and developing annual and long-range plans to address conservation problems.

**NRCS also:**

- Provides leadership in incorporation of NRCS concerns into the Partnership's annual and long-range plans
- Keeps the board informed about NRCS activities in the district, and requests that the board takes action on issues that require it
- Reviews and discusses with district officials the civil rights policies contained in the Cooperative and Mutual Working Agreements on annual basis

## **South Carolina Department of Natural Resources Land, Water and Conservation Division**

The primary mission of the SCDNR-Land, Water and Conservation Division is to help ensure that the natural resources of the state are managed wisely.

As the division of state government charged with administering the Soil and Water Conservation Districts Law, the SCDNR-LWCD provides professional, technical, and financial assistance to the state's 46 conservation districts in carrying out conservation programs.

The division also coordinates development of programs to address nonpoint source pollution; collects and makes available to the public a wealth of information about the land and related resources for wise land resource planning decisions; provides technical assistance in the design and use of "Best Management Practices."

The SCDNR has six additional divisions that contribute to the conservation of South Carolina's natural resources as well. They are the Administrative Services Division, Conservation Education and Communications Division, Law Enforcement Division, Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries Division and Marine Resources Division.

As the division responsible for the coordination of South Carolina's conservation districts, SCDNR-LWCD provides funds and staff to the conservation districts for program planning and implementation, technical assistance, education and public affairs.

The SCDNR, through the Land, Water and Conservation Division, assists conservation districts by:

- Providing professional and technical staff assistance and financial assistance through state-appropriated funds and federal grants
- Assisting in developing annual and long-range plans for carrying out district goals and objectives
- Assisting in preparation of annual reports of each district
- Providing timely training for all district commissioners, associate commissioners, district staff, and other volunteers
- Developing, conducting and evaluating conservation education programs in concert with district commissioners
- Promoting programs of districts through the news media, exhibits, tours, conferences, visual aids, brochures, and staff presentations to civic, educational, agricultural, church, youth and other groups
- Securing the cooperation of State and Federal agencies in assisting districts and land users
- Assisting districts in assessing erosion and sediment reduction and stormwater management

**South Carolina**  
**Department of Natural Resources**  
**Land, Water and Conservation Division**  
**CONSERVATION SPECIALIST**

**Job purpose:**

to coordinate the division's administrative, educational and technical functions within a multi-county area. The position is responsible for planning and implementing a variety of educational, promotional, training and technical programs as well as providing limited direct technical assistance as programs and needs dictate. The position serves as liaison between the division and the assigned conservation districts, district commissioners, watershed districts, watershed directors, RC & D areas, local Councils of Government, and local units of government within the assigned service area.

**Essential functions include:**

administrative assistance to the district staff members, correspondence, monitoring reporting needs, transmitting pertinent information to the boards on a monthly basis, inspection of state-owned equipment, coordinating meetings, and giving presentations for school and civic groups on behalf of the district. This position is also responsible for providing consultative services to schools and community leaders on educational or conservation programs and for insuring that annual planning and reporting is completed. Based on experience and/or training, some Conservation Specialists will also have statewide responsibilities assigned to them which will necessitate work and travel beyond the normally assigned districts.

**Conservation Specialists serve in three major categories:**

- administrative
- educational
- technical

*As a commissioner, you can see that the Conservation Specialist has a broad range of assignments. To be sure that your district benefits from these services, it is imperative that during your Partnership planning (annual and long-range) you consider and combine your needs as a district with the special skills of the Conservation Specialist.*